



POLICY FOR THE USE OF PHOTOGRAPHY AND FILM IN CHURCH

1. Introduction

Churches enjoy and welcome publicity. Photographs and video add colour, vibrancy, life and interest to articles promoting church activities, events and initiatives. Making use of photographs for publicity materials and to promote the church in the press can encourage and attract engagement with the church and celebrate the church's achievements. Images must however be used in a responsible way. As Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) we need to respect the right to everyone's privacy, being especially mindful of children, young people, vulnerable adults and those in sensitive occupations, and to be aware of potential safeguarding issues.

The issues are the same for still photographs, digital images or films. For convenience they are all referred to as images.

The OVMC PCCs will take every reasonable effort to minimise risk by following the guidelines detailed in this document.

This policy applies to the use of photographs and video at church services and events and the use of photos and videos in church publicity materials, on its website, social media and in the press. Its implementation is the responsibility of all church officers, activity leaders and volunteers.

Notification of the relevant parts of this policy will be communicated to families, users and attendees at services and events.

2. Safeguarding

There may be a risk when specific children can be identified in an image or connected to regular attendance at a particular location. In respect of official church photographs The OVMC PCCs will:

- ensure that images are stored securely and used only by those authorised to do so;
- ensure that electronic images are stored on a password protected secure computer or device to which members of the public have no access;
- ensure if personal equipment has to be used for church purposes, that photographs of individual children, once they have been used for the purpose for which they were taken, are deleted;
- obtain appropriate consents
- not use an image of any child who is subject to known child protection arrangements;
- ensure that children are appropriately dressed in any used images avoiding school names and logos whenever possible.

In the event of the inappropriate use of children's photographs the OVMC PCCs will follow the appropriate safeguarding procedures.

3. Data Protection Act 2018

Images count as sensitive personal data under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). As with all such data, they should only be used with the consent of the person in the image.

Gaining consent regarding the use of images of children

- Children under the age of 13: consent should be gained from their parents;



- Children aged between 13 and 16: consent should be gained from parents and the children themselves;
- Children aged 17: consent should be gained from the children themselves.

The OVMC PCCs will not display images of children or young people online, in publications or in a public place without such consent. Written consent will be obtained for groups that meet regularly and records of these will be held securely.

The Data Protection Act does not apply to photographs or films taken for personal use by family

4. Photographing and filming at events and activities taking place in church

There will be circumstances in which parents and other attendees at activities want to take photographs or video, for instance concerts, plays, and choirs. For youth events in particular, many young people will have a camera on their mobile phone and will regularly post images of themselves and their friends on social media. The OVMC PCCs recognise the difficulties of enforcing and policing image-taking at services and events: equally it wishes to enable appropriate and safe image-taking.

Occasional Offices

Weddings - Only official photographers and videographers may take images. It is the responsibility of the wedding couple to manage who can and cannot be photographed or filmed. All attendees will be told of the zero image-taking rule before the service.

Baptisms - usually family and friends are the only attendees. Families to be advised at the baptism visit that ideally there should be a nominated photographer.

Funerals – increasingly photos being taken. Families to be advised at the funeral visit to consider the use of photography and film at the event.

Church Services, Groups and Events

The OVMC PCCs will nominate a photographer for official photos only used with appropriate consents. Congregation to be reminded that if other photos are taken, they should be for personal use and not to be shared on social media or the internet.

External Groups

Where an external group (such as a school) is holding a service or event in the church the group's own policy (e.g. a complete ban) on images will be used and communicated.

Consent is not needed if children appear in a wide-angle group photograph in a public space (for instance, a photograph of the church fete). A church is not a public place in this sense but there may still be occasions when it would not be reasonable, practical or proportionate to secure consent for every individual child who appears in the photograph. In these circumstances, organisers should make clear to all participants and parents that these kinds of images will be taken, and for what purposes.

Consent can also be implied; if an activity leader invites people to be part of a group photograph, then those who gather for the photograph have given their consent by virtue of having done so.



5. Sexting

Sexting is 'when someone shares sexual, naked or semi-naked images or videos of themselves or others or sends sexually explicit messages'. The sharing of sexual imagery of people under 18 by adults constitutes child sexual abuse and the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and the Police should be informed immediately.

Responding to sexting incidents involving young people

Refer the incident to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser as soon as possible who will assist in managing the response according to best safeguarding practice. These can be difficult situations which need skilled advice to handle properly. An immediate referral to police and/or children's social care will be made if:

- The image(s) of the young person have been shared by an adult.
- There is reason to believe that a young person has been coerced, blackmailed or groomed, or if there are concerns about their capacity to consent (for example owing to learning difficulties);
- What is known about the imagery suggests the content depicts sexual acts which are unusual for the young person's developmental stage, or are violent;
- The image involves sexual acts and any person in the image is under 16;
- There is reason to believe the young person is at immediate risk of harm owing to the sharing of the image, or example, the young person is presenting as suicidal or self-harming.

6. The Press

The use of photographs in newspapers and magazines is already subject to strict guidelines. The Press Complaints Commission's Code of Practice states that:

- Journalists must not interview or photograph a child under the age of 16 on subjects involving the welfare of the child in the absence of or without the consent of a parent or other adult who is responsible for the children.
- Children must not be approached or photographed while at church without the permission of the church authorities.
- There is no breach of the Data Protection Act 2018 in passing on a child's name to a journalist as long as parental consent has been secured.

The OVMC PCCs will provide names of children to accompany photographs published in newspapers and magazines only where the young person, parent or guardian have provided their consent.

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